

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

STR-08 AID-20 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02 TRSE-00 XMB-07

OPIC-12 CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 RSR-01 /161 W

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R 051340 Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6447

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PFOR, FI, EEC

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT URHO KEKKONEN COMMENTS ON EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
(EC) AGREEMENT.

REF: HELSINKI 1474

BEGIN SUMMARY. IN INTERVIEW WITH PRESS JULY 1, KEKKONEN MADE
INTERESTING COMMENTS ON EC AGREEMENT, INCLUDING A SHOW OF
UNHAPPINESS THAT SIGNING DECISION MUST BE MADE SO SOON. HE SAID
THAT IF SIGNING COULD HAVE BEEN DELAYED AND AGREEMENT WERE TO
COME INTO EFFECT IN 1975 IT WOULD " HAVE EASED OUR SITUATION
CONSIDERABLY." OBVIOUSLY HE WAS COMMENTING IN TERMS OF POLITICAL
RATHER THAN ECONOMIC SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

1. TEXT OF INTERVIEW WITH HELSINGIN SANOMAT CORRESPONDENT
ON JULY 1 WITH QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATING TO EC AGREEMENT
FOLLOWS:

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A. QUESTION: FINLAND'S FOREIGN POLICY STRUCTURE WILL COME UNDER MUCH CLOSER SCRUTINY DURING THE CSCE AND ATTENTION IS DRAWN TO THE FACT THAT FINLAND HAS NOT YET SIGNED THE FREE TRADE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATED WITH THE EUROPEAN COMMON MARKET. COULD YOU GIVE ANY INDICATION ABOUT THE PROGRESS IN THIS QUESTION?

B. ANSWER: I THINK WE DID THE RIGHT THING WHEN WE DID NOT MAKE HASTY DECISIONS. I SUPPOSE WE HAVE NOT LOST ANYTHING IMPORTANT. IF WE HAD SIGNED THE AGREEMENT WHEN THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY PRESENTED ITSELF, THE RESULT WOULD HAVE BEEN SERIOUS DOMESTIC POLITICAL PROBLEMS FOR US. IF THESE PROBLEMS WOULD HAVE BEEN MOST HEATED DURING THE PREPARATORY TALKS FOR THE CSCE, THEY COULD HAVE HINDERED THE PREPARATIONS VERY SEVERELY AND THEY EVEN COULD HAVE BEEN A REASON NOT TO HAVE THE CSCE HERE. IN THE PAST YEAR, WE HAVE BEEN ABLE, IN MY OPINION, TO CHART OUR ECONOMIC RELATIONS. BESIDES, WE KNOW THERE HAS BEEN SUCH POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POLICY CHANGES IN THE INTERNATIONAL FIELD THAT WE HAVE A BETTER CHANCE NOW THAN A YEAR AGO TO CONSIDER OUR OWN ECONOMIC POLICY SOLUTIONS.

BUT TO PUT IT BLUNTLY, I COULD ADMIT PERHAPS THAT WE MAY HAVE MADE A MISTAKE IN OUR NEGOTIATIONS FOR INTEGRATION. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN WISER TO MOVE THE TIME TO THE END OF 1973-- ONE YEAR AHEAD SO THAT THE NEGOTIATED AGREEMENT WOULD NOT HAVE COME IN FORCE UNTIL THE BEGINNING OF 1975. I THINK WE COULD HAVE ACHIEVED THIS BY NEGOTIATIONS. THAT WOULD HAVE EASED OUR SITUATION CONSIDERABLY.

C. QUESTION: DURING THE SPRING PARLIAMENTARY SESSION, THERE WERE REPEATED RUMOR ABOUT DISSOLVING THE PARLIAMENT AND HOLDING ELECTIONS IN THE AUTUMN AS A RESULT OF THE DIFFICULTIES WITH THE SO- CALLED PROTECTION BILLS. DO YOU THINK THIS WOULD BE A GOOD THING FOR FINLAND, WHEN A GREAT FOREIGN POLICY TASK IS INCOMPLETE ?

D. ANSWER: I DON'T THINK DISSOLVING THE PARLIAMENT AND HOLDING ELECTIONS IN THE AUTUMN OR IN THE SPRING DESIRABLE, PARTLY FOR THE REASON YOU MENTIONED. ELECTIONS WOULD NOT BE GOOD FOR THE COUNTRY BECAUSE OUR FOREIGN POLICY TASK HAS NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEEN COMPLETED.

2. KEKKONEN'S COMMENTS THAT IF SIGNING COULD HAVE BEEN DELAYED AND IF EC AGREEMENT WERE TO COME INTO EFFECT IN 1975 IT WOULD " HAVE EASED OUR SITUATION" WAS MADE IN POLITICAL RATHER THAN ECONOMIC CONTEXT. BUSINESS LEADERS AND NON- COMMUNIST PRESS CONTINUES TO SUPPORT SIGNING EC AGREEMENT AS SOON AS

POSSIBLE ON ECONOMIC GROUNDS AND GENERAL ATTITUDE OF INDUSTRY
LEADERS IS THAT AGREEMENT WILL BE SIGNED IN TIME, I. E. IN TIME
TO INFORM EC BY NOVEMBER 30. THOUGH KEKKONEN PLACES PROBLEM
OF SIGNING IN TERMS OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL FACTORS, IT IS POSSI-
BLE THAT HE IS STILL WARY OF SOVIET REACTIONS AND WOULD PREFER
WAITING UNTIL BILATERAL TRADE AGREEMENTS ARE COMPLETED WITH EAST
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. KEKKONEN'S COMMENTS COULD ALSO BE A SIGNAL
OF HIS INTENTION NOT TO SIGN BEFORE DEADLINE.
KREHBIEL

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